

# I ADL225

1006825

-001

Update to  
1006799

From: FRED RIECKS <FRIECKS@idph.state.il.us>  
To: R5CHG.IN("TSCHAFFER@idph.state.il.us")  
Date: 3/28/98 4:18pm  
Subject: Pesticide Misuse

West Chicago Environmental Health staff have advised that they are investigating the misuse of a pesticide in Orland Park, IL at a Venture store. Apparently, Petty's Exterminating Company (Chicago PECO) was called to the Venture store located at 15701 S. Harlem in Orland Park, IL, on Saturday, 3/21/98 because of a mouse problem. The PECO apparently used ZP Tracking Powder, a restricted use pesticide containing 10% zinc phosphide as the active ingredient, in an attempt to gain control of the mouse problem. (The material is grayish-black in color, has a garlic odor and is in a container that bears a warning signal word (i.e., indicates that the product is moderately toxic). We are uncertain at this time as to exactly how the powder was applied; however, it appears to have been spread throughout many areas of the store. Bell Laboratories (Marlton, NJ), the manufacturer of the rodenticide, is being contacted for specific directions on decontamination of exposed surfaces.

There have been a couple of individuals (possibly employees) that have experienced vomiting and diarrhea, symptoms which have been associated with acute exposure to the product. They are being advised to see their physicians. (Other symptoms that are known to be associated with acute zinc phosphide poisoning include shock, weak heart beat, low blood pressure, loss of consciousness, cyanosis, rales, restlessness and fever. Technical grade zinc phosphide (i.e., above 80%) has an LD 50 of about 45.7 mg/kg; Lower concentration formulations have higher LD 50 values (i.e., they are less toxic). Again, a 10% formulation was involved at the store.)

According to staff, Orland Park Health Department closed the store yesterday, 3/25. At this point, I do not know the details regarding the closing of the store. Staff indicate that Eileen Crosby is the contact at the local health dept. Shirley Bohm, IDPH FD&D in Central Office and Paul McDonald, IDPH FD&D in Bellwood have also been advised since there are packaged foods and possibly a snack bar in the facility.

The pesticide is only to be used in inaccessible areas and offers control when mice pick it up on their feet/fur and ingest it when they clean themselves. Once ingested, the product reacts with water and stomach acid to release phosphine gas.

To my knowledge, the media have not been involved yet. Questions, please call me at 5-3176.

Fred Riecks  
Environmental Health

CC: R5CHG.IN("JOCONNOR@idph.state.il.us","EWILDER@idph...

. 2/4

From: FRED RIECKUS <FRIECKS@idph.state.il.us>  
To: R5WST.R5RCRA(BAUMGARTNER-DONALD)  
Date: 3/27/05 8:37am  
Subject: Pesticide Misuse -Forwarded

Don--

Attached is a copy of an e-mail note that I am providing to you about a misuse investigation we are involved with involving Zinc Phosphide Tracking Powder (10%) at a Ventura store in Orland Park. Can you check with your lab to see if they have the capability to analyze for it? Jerry Mack can't do it, IDA can't do it and we are still checking with our Chicago lab to see if they can to do it. Thanks

Fred

PS...the press know about this now.

CC: R5CHG011(COONNOR@idph.state.il.us); R5WST.DER@idph.

From: DONALD BAUMGARTNER  
To: R5CHG.in."kapalap@state.mi.us"  
Date: 3/27/98 10:38am  
Subject: Zinc Phosphide Pesticide Misuse - Forwarded Reply

Dear Polly (acting for Brian Rowe of MDA)

As per our telephone conversation a short while ago, the Illinois Department of Public Health is currently in search of a State Laboratory which has the ability to analyze for zinc phosphide tracking powder. The Illinois State labs do not have the ability, and neither does our EPA Central Regional Lab or Indiana State Chemist. Pat Boone of our Section spoke earlier today both with Chun Wei Keo and Leon Schmetzer of your Michigan Lab, and they are willing to analyze the samples not tested only yesterday. IDPH is certain that the samples are ZP as admitted by the applicator, but they desire a confirmation for the subsequent legal actions. An unconfirmed number of persons suffered poisoning symptoms.

IDPH is not in an immediate rush for the sample analyses. Collected are 2-3 jars of actual powder found within the Venture store. The product in question was overpriced within the store for mouse control. The product used was ZP Tracking Powder (EPA Reg. #12455-16). We will contact you immediately as IDPH decides that they will need your laboratory services.

cc: IDA (Tom Walker, Walt Black)  
IDPH (Fred Riecks)  
Region 5 (Dave Star, John Ward, Bruce Wilkinson, Pat Boone)

Donald Baumgartner  
Illinois Project Officer/Life Scientist  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Pesticides Program Section (DRT-8J)  
77 West Jackson Blvd.  
Chicago, IL 60673-3590  
ph. 312/886-7835  
fax 312/353-4788  
EMail <baumgartner.donald@epamail.epa.gov>

>>> FRED RIECKS <FRIECKS@idph.state.il.us> 03/27/98 08:37am >>>

Don-

Attached is a copy of an e-mail note that I am providing to you about a misuse investigation we are involved with involving Zinc Phosphide Tracking Powder (10%) at a Venture store in Orland Park. Can you check with your lab to see if they have the capability to analyze for ZP? Jerry Mack can't do it, IDA can't do it and we are still checking with our Chicago lab to see if they can to do it. Thanks

Fred

PS...the press know about this now.

From: DONALD J. RIECKS  
To: R5C1.R5CHEM.N."FRIECKS"@idph.state.il.us", rtpmain@idph.state.il.us  
Date: 3/27/98 8:37am  
Subject: Pestle, 10% Zinc Phosphide - Copy

Dear Fred,

I FIRST received a call about this incident at 8:50 AM from Tom Walker. Tom said that he had been first notified himself at 6 AM today from the Illinois Emergency Management Agency. He has told that 7 people have been injured from the treatment of zinc phosphide within a Venture store in Orland Park. He was unsure of the date of treatment or human exposures. Tom said that he would fax me a copy of a Chicago Tribune article on the exposure when he receives it.

As for the lab capabilities in response to your inquiry below, as stated in our telephone conversation a short time ago, I have already checked with our EPA Region 5 Central Regional Lab (Chi Tang), who stated that they do not have the capability to analyze for zinc phosphide (no standards or methods), but suggested a test for zinc only as an indirect measure of residue. Apparently CRB has that ability to measure for zinc.

I will telephone you when we track down a lab for zinc phosphide

Don

>>> FRED RIECKS <FRIECKS@idph.state.il.us> 03/27/98 08:37am >>>

Don-

Attached is a copy of an e-mail note that I am providing to you about a misuse investigation we are involved with involving Zinc Phosphide Tracking Powder (10%) at a Venture store in Orland Park. Can you check with your lab to see if they have the capability to analyze for ZP? Jerry Mack can't do it, IDA can't do it and we are still checking with our Chicago lab to see if they can to do it. Thanks

Fred

PS...the press know about this now.

CC: WARD JOHN, R5C1.R5CHEM.TANG-CHI, R5C1.R5CHEM.ELL...

13544

R122569

Chemical: Zinc phosphide ( $\text{Zn}_3\text{P}_2$ )

PC Code:  
088601

HED File Code: 15100 Other Incident Documents

Memo Date: 3/26/1998

File ID: 00000000

Accession #: 412-06-0195

HED Records Reference Center  
7/20/2006